



# The Lowell Volunteer Partner

Issue No. 1 ■ May, 2005

Lowell National Historical Park

## MICHAEL CREASEY, NEW SUPERINTENDENT



Photo by Philip Lupsiewicz

Few things inspire Americans like the immense natural and physical beauty and the historical poignancy of national parks. The American ethic of charity and volunteerism has made a remarkable impact on our national parks. Lowell National Historical Park is recognized for its innovative education and interpretive programming, partnerships that have preserved the historic fabric of this community and special events that celebrate our heritage.

We view volunteerism as an essential force in achieving the mission of the Park. Our aim is to foster a culture of service, citizenship and responsibility, which will necessitate new partnerships between government, the non-profit sector, businesses, schools and other community institutions. The diversity of this park and the partnerships that makes it successful provide for many volunteer opportunities to help us achieve our mission.

I applaud Lowell's corps of volunteers and challenge those now serving to look beyond the inner circles and reach out to others who also may become stewards of this special place. I hope that you will be able to attend the upcoming volunteer orientation and training session scheduled for June 18 and I very much look forward to working with you.

## JUNE 18: VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION DAY

For the rookies and the old pro's, come join us for a day of fun and learning on June 18 to better your grasp of the history, interpretive themes, and resources of the park. The activities will kick off at the Event Center at the Boott Cotton Mills Museum at 9:00. Please call Assistant Volunteer Coordinator Paul Mueller at 978-275-1740 by June 11 if you can attend. Here is the agenda:

- 9:00 Coffee and pastries
- 9:30 Volunteerism and Stewardship by Park Supt. Michael Creasey
- 9:45 Importance of Volunteers to Lowell NHP by Mike Wurm
- 10:00 The NPS Heritage
- 10:30 Telling Our Story by Becky Warren
- 11:00 Boott Cotton Mills Museum Tour
- 11:30 Moody St. Feeder Gatehouse tour by volunteers Bill & Barbara Rawnsley
- 12:00 Group lunch

## COME TO THE CANAL CLEANUPS ON MAY 21 AND JUNE 4



Bristol-Myers Squibb volunteers cleaning up the Western Canal on Day of Caring 2004

We need you to join us for two canal cleanup events that will take place soon on May 21 and June 4. The tasks will include picking up trash, sweeping, removing overgrown vegetation, and raking. Bring protective clothes, water, gloves, and good work shoes.

The local sponsors of the May 21 **Great American Cleanup** from 9 – 12 are

Keep Lowell Beautiful, the park, city of Lowell, and the Lowell Canalwaters Cleaners. Come to the Visitor Center at 246 Market Street to be assigned. Free parking is behind the VC off Dutton St.

Don't forget the **Acre Neighborhood and Western Canal Cleanup** on Saturday, June 4, 8:30 - 12. While this is a neighborhood clean-up organized by the Coalition for a Better Acre, the park and the Lowell Canalwaters Cleaners will be looking for up to 200 volunteers to remove trash and weeds. Flowers will also be planted. Meet at the CBA lot at 517 Moody Street.

## THE '99-ERS, OUR MOST ENDURING VOLUNTEERS

By Mike Wurm

Organizing my new telephone rolodex, I found a group of old rolodex cards for volunteers that go back to the former volunteer coordinator, Marcia Dolce. These folks have been volunteering since at least 1999. The names of these enduring volunteers are:

**Clee Ace**, Curatorial  
**Dotty & Marie Baillargeon**, Events & Spinners Games  
**Pat Bowe**, Events & Lowell Festival Foundation  
**Jeanette Dose**, Park Library  
**Margie Feeney**, Public Information Office  
**Barry Fisher**, Events & Lowell Festival Foundation  
**Fred Forster**, Boott Cotton Mills Museum  
**Beth Fraser**, Events & Lowell Festival Foundation  
**Mike Gaulin**, Interpretation (February 2000)  
**Robert Pare**, Photographer & Adopt-a-Canalway  
**Henry Peront**, Trolley Crew  
**Eva Phasoulas**, Events  
**Ben Prokuski**, Boott Weave Room  
**Bill and Barbara Rawnsley**, Events and Moody Street Feeder Gatehouse  
**Shirley Seeley**, Events  
**Louise Sweet**, Visitor Center  
**Don Thomas**, Trolley Crew

You '99-ers deserve more than just a round of applause. Please come to the June 18 Volunteer Orientation Day for a surprise reward!



River Ambassadors with rangers who helped shape their summer experience. Photo by Phil Lupsiewicz.

## THE RIVER AMBASSADORS ARE COMING BACK!

Again, this summer four Cambodian-American high school students, members of the River Ambassadors Program of the UMASS - Lowell's Center for Family, Work, and Community, will experience a challenging summer in the Interpretation and Education Division of Lowell National Historical Park. They will learn the ropes of how the park gives tours, operates its exhibits, and interprets the unique industrial and environmental history of the Merrimack Watershed.

Pictured above left to right, the summer 2004 River Ambassadors are: Joan Chun, Sophall Tom, Jany Chourb, and Cara Choup. For 2005 three will return from last year's crew and will be joined by a new recruit.

Ranger William Morton will supervise the River Ambassadors this year and he is excited about adding new challenges and responsibilities to keep things interesting for the team. He is planning to increase training opportunities and provide special field trips.

During the summer, the four will hone communication and interpretive skills, and work side-by-side with rangers in park operations and programs. Like last year, these River Ambassadors will work closely with park rangers to plan and produce special boat tours for the Lowell Southeast Asian Water Festival.

## HIGHLIGHTING THE NEW VOLUNTEER PLAN

Although the park has many areas that need volunteer assistance, two major thrusts for 2005-06 are:

**Support for Mogan Cultural Center and community outreach:** The volunteer office will support and/or lead on a number of community outreach efforts undertaken by the Mogan Cultural Center or other operations of the park. Community groups and partners that use park facilities for public programs such as exhibits or other special projects such as the KLB Community Gardens Greenhouse at the maintenance shop will be adopted within the park volunteer program.

**Community Stewardship for the Lowell Canals Legacy Project:** This will entail a more active volunteer commitment, including not only cleaning trash from the canals and landscaped walkways on an ongoing basis, but a major expansion of "adopt-a-canalway" partnerships, and more and better organized community clean-up events. A new volunteer organization, the Lowell Canalwaters Cleaners, as well as partner Keep Lowell Beautiful, will be important in this effort.

## WE NEED TO CATCH UP TO YOU

We would like to keep you informed about special events like Volunteer Appreciation Day and the Volunteer Orientation Day. If you have moved, changed your telephone number, or started a new email account, please send the latest changes to [paul\\_mueller@nps.gov](mailto:paul_mueller@nps.gov) or call 978-275-1740.

## GATEHOUSE VOLUNTEERS EXTRAORDINAIRE



Photo by Amy Glowacki

Congratulations to volunteers Bill and Barbara Rawnley for their determination to keep the Moody Street Feeder Gatehouse open to the public. Since 2003, this dedicated couple has given well over 800 hours of labor to making the old gatehouse on Merrimack Street presentable. They have landscaped the garden plot, scrubbed the interior, and given tours to hundreds of visitors.

They could use a few other volunteers to help on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays this summer. If interested, call Bill or Barb at 978-459-2915.

## HELP WANTED

The Lowell Canalwaters Cleaners need volunteers to help keep the canals looking great. Contact Bill Moreau at [bmoreau@comcast.net](mailto:bmoreau@comcast.net) or call Paul Mueller at 978-275-1740.



## SPINDLE CITY RETURNS

Spindle City Corps re-emerges this summer for its seventh season helping the park with landscape conservation, canal cleanup, vegetation removal, and other tasks. While the park is a sponsor, Community Teamwork, Inc. oversees this program for youth and young adults. For more information on Spindle City, call 978-654-5080.



Seasonal maintenance ranger Armand Leboeuf and a Spindle City crew clean up the Lower Locks area.

## VOLUNTEER SNAPSHOTS:

### KATHI LEVINE

Volunteer Park Ranger Kathi Levine really appreciates the help that professional park rangers have given her over the past two years. She credits the park with helping her develop new skills in historical program presentation and with easing her transition back to work after being a fulltime mother. She also says that her experience at Lowell led to her being offered a teacher's aide job at an elementary school in Andover.

Furthermore, Kathi likes the mission of the National Park Service. "The rangers have dedicated their lives to preserving our precious cultural resources and to interpreting the history of our nation. It is a real honor to be here."

Kathi had been a fulltime mother for about five years. She wanted to get back into the job market, but she realized that she still had too many family commitments. After volunteering at other organizations, she finally found what she was looking for at the park's Visitor Center, where she could work just three or four hours every other Saturday.



Kathi Levine at the Visitor Center Desk

Becoming more knowledgeable about Lowell history, Kathi also began volunteering at the Boott Cotton Mills Museum in addition to working at the Visitor Center. She has given programs on the exhibit floor of museum and likes being able to talk about history in greater depth

### DAN FRANTZ

Born and raised in Detroit, Michigan, Dan Frantz obtained his doctorate and became a professor of computer science at Wayne State University. He later joined Digital Equipment Corporation and picked Chelmsford as his home. Dan worked for Digital until 1997 when his work unit became the core of a new software firm.



Dan Frantz at the park's headquarters

When Dan retired, he contacted the park about volunteering. Gray Fitzsimons, the Park Historian, figured that his Ethnicity and Enterprise project about immigrant

businesses was a perfect fit for Dan. Dan agreed to do research and writing. Since Dan was computer-savvy, he decided to use a major database program in order to organize and analyze the 9,600 data records collected.

Early data analysis indicates that while certain ethnic groups dominated the population of a given neighborhood, there was a large degree of social and economic interaction among the different groups. Gray and Dan are finding that ethnic businesses contributed significantly to this intermingling process. For instance, as a neighborhood changed, a largely Polish grocery store altered its product line to serve the needs of the changing population.

Dan and Gray have produced a great deal of genealogical research and are putting all of this material together into a final report. A book may also be available in local libraries as well as hopefully the state archives. Dan is also working on a project web site that will appear soon. After Dan's great success on this, Gray and Dan both hope that he will dive into a new historical project for the park.

### SUE MCNAMARA



Sue McNamara on the Summer Trolley

Sue McNamara needed a change after retiring. For years, she had been running a grocery store in Melrose, MA, the family business where she had worked since childhood.

Realizing that she had spent her whole career indoors, she wanted to work outdoors for a change. Scanning a local newspaper, she saw an advertisement about Lowell National Historical Park needing volunteers. She called the park and eventually met John Marciano, the supervisor of the park's trolley operation.

"Trolleys are not for everyone," John warned her. "You have to work in the snow and the rain." Sue loves working in the snow and the rain. "You have to be constantly on your toes looking out for the safety of the trolley riders." This was no problem for Sue, since she had always had to be watchful of the people and the regular operations of her store.

After completing training, Sue got the job called Volunteer Trolley Crew Member. Sue now works Sundays on the trolleys with Motorman Fred Brown from March through November

"Sue was made for the job", stated Sharon Krawczyk, the Trolley Operator who frequently works with Sue. Sharon added: "Susan is as nimble and flexible as a gold medal gymnast. She is also dedicated, enthusiastic, and hardworking."

Sue's job entails more than flagging and safety concerns. She welcomes visitors, answers their questions, and gives interpretation of historic sites along the way.

Sue summed up her job this way: "First, you must keep safety in mind. Second, you must meet the visitors' needs. While doing these two things, you must be able to have fun. If I were not having fun, I wouldn't be doing this."

## DOTTY AND MARIE BAILLARGEON

From where they sit at the park's information table at the stadium, Dotty and Marie Baillargeon cannot see any of the action of a Lowell Spinners baseball game. "This place is so bubbly; you do not need to see the game," says Dotty.

Dotty and Marie Baillargeon are a mother-and-daughter team who have volunteered for Lowell National Historical Park since Marie was a baby. Marie in 1989, just three months old, accompanied her mother in the City of Lights parade, becoming the park's youngest volunteer ever. They were both dressed up as mill girls.



Dotty and Marie Baillargeon

Last year Dotty and Marie volunteered at every home Spinners game except when the Lowell Folk Festival rolled around or when Marie had to go to one her martial arts classes. They have also worked at the Visitor Center, Doors Open Lowell, Winterfest, and other events.

"Everyone is like one big family here." Throughout the evening at the ballgame, Dotty introduced me to many of her working colleagues at the ballpark – including the Canaligator. The Canaligator is the famed beast of the Lowell canals who has adopted the ballpark as his new home. Every evening the Canaligator gives Dotty or Marie a big hug. Sometimes, Dotty and the Canaligator even dance the "jitterbug" together.

Besides the people working in the stands, Dotty and Marie have gotten to know some of the players. Not missing an opportunity to extend hospitality, Dotty and Marie have handed out park and city brochures to the visiting teams.

Both spend the long hours at the ballpark, because they feel that it is very important to give back to the community. Dotty adds that this is no problem: "Just being here is awesome. People are very kind and considerate. Many of my friends are right here."

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*Except where noted, this newsletter contains stories and photography by Paul Mueller. The editor is Mike Wurm. Become a contributor! Send us your suggestions for future articles. Contact paul\_mueller@nps.gov.*

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## A SPECIAL THANKS

Over the years there have been two very special volunteer organizations that have shown exceptional dedication in their assistance to the park. These are the **Lowell Festival Foundation** coordinated by Janet Leggat and the **Boston and Maine Railroad Historical Society** work team led by Jim Nigzus, Jr.

These groups have spent countless hours in helping the park with the Lowell Folk Festival and the railroad exhibit respectively. For this reason, the Volunteer Office will transmit \$100 to each of these cooperative programs. This is a small gesture toward both groups for their very large volunteer contributions. Thank you very much.

### THE VOLUNTEER BILL OF RIGHTS

(As it appeared in the July 2003 edition of *The Mount Rainier Steward* Edited By Park Ranger Kevin Bacher)

- The right to be treated as a co-worker, not just free help.
- The right to suitable assignment with consideration for personal preferences, temperament, life experience, education, and work history.
- The right to know as much about the organization as possible: its policies, people, and programs.
- The right to proper job training.
- The right to continuing education on the job as follow-up to initial training, information on new developments, and training to prepare for greater responsibility.
- The right to sound guidance and direction by someone who is experienced, well-informed, patient and thoughtful, and who has the time to invest in giving guidance.
- The right to a place to work: an orderly, designated place conducive to work and worthy of the job to be done.
- The right to a variety of assignments, and increasing levels of responsibility and challenge.
- The right to be heard, to have a part in planning, to feel free to make suggestions, and to have respect shown for honest opinions.
- The right to recognition in the form of promotion and awards, through day-to-day expressions of appreciation, and by being treated as a bonafide coworker.